(369)

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.4/1994/L.98
4 March 1994

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fiftieth session
Agenda item 22

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Austria, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Jordan*, Kuwait*, Madagascar*, Senegal* and Spain*: draft resolution

Effects of armed conflicts on children's lives

The Commission on Human Rights

Welcoming the promptness with which a large number of States have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is evidence of unprecedented mobilization by the international community,

Noting in particular the fundamental importance of every child's inherent right to life, as recognized in article 6 of the Convention,

Reaffirming that this right is to be applied especially in times of armed conflict, when children's lives and physical integrity are particularly threatened,

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* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Noting with interest that the Committee on the Rights of the Child, at its second session, decided to hold its first general discussion on the situation of children in armed conflicts (see CRC/C/10), thereby acknowledging the fundamental importance of this issue for the promotion and protection of children's rights and the role of the Convention in this regard,

Noting with consternation the very large number of innocent civilians who continue to be the victims of all forms of armed conflicts now taking place in the world,

Deploring the continued practice of enlisting children in the armed forces,

Deeply concerned at the alarming figures for deaths and serious injuries entailing life-long disability among children in areas of conflict,

Alarmed at the information that some particularly injurious weapons, especially anti-personnel mines, continue to strike long after conflicts have ended,

Noting with distress that children are often among the main victims of such weapons, and especially of anti-personnel mines,

Fully aware in this respect of the importance of operations for the effective detection, clearance and destruction of unremoved mines, operations that cannot be conducted without resources or special skills, and anxious to promote international cooperation in this field,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993 entitled "Assistance in mine clearance",

Noting the commitments entered into by States in fields pertaining to humanitarian law, and particularly the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and their Additional Protocols,

Recalling that, on the basis both of international humanitarian law and of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, States must take all possible measures to ensure special protection and suitable care for children affected by an armed conflict,

Emphasizing also the need to ensure the physical and psychological rehabilitation, as well as social reintegration, of children affected by an armed conflict,

Recalling also in this regard the specific commitments entered into by States that have ratified the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects, and particularly protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices, and calling on States to consider ratifying these instruments,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 48/79 concerning the convening and preparation of a conference to review the Convention, priority being given to the provisions of Protocol II,

Recalling its resolution 1993/83 of 10 March 1993,

Aware that the World Conference on Human Rights, convened in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1990, strongly supported the idea of a study on the protection of children against the effects of armed conflicts, including protection against indiscriminate use of all weapons of war, especially anti-personnel mines, as indicated in paragraph 50 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Taking note with satisfaction of General Assembly resolution 48/157 entitled "Protection of children affected by armed conflicts",

1. Expresses its deep concern and indignation at the serious consequences of armed conflicts for children, directly or indirectly involved, who are often among the main civilian victims of the use of anti-personnel mines;

2. Expresses its gratitude again to the Committee on the Rights of the Child for the views expressed at its second session on the issue of children in armed conflicts, in particular on the need to strengthen preventive measures and to implement effective protection for children, and notes the recommendations made by the Committee at its third session on means of improving the protection of children from the adverse effects of armed conflicts (see CRC/C/16), including the recommendation made to the General Assembly to undertake a study;

3. Welcomes the General Assembly decision to appoint an expert, who, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights and UNICEF, will undertake a thorough study of this issue, especially the participation of children in armed conflicts, as well as the relevance and adequacy of existing standards, and will make specific recommendations on means of preventing children from being affected by armed conflicts and of improving protection for children in armed conflicts,

and on measures to ensure their effective protection, including protection against indiscriminate use of all weapons of war,
especially anti-personnel mines, and to ensure their psychological and physical rehabilitation and social reintegration, taking into account the recommendations of the World Conference and of the Committee on the Rights of the Child;

4. Urges Member States, United Nations bodies and agencies, and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO and the International Committee of the Red Cross to contribute to the study;

5. Expresses its particular gratitude to the International Committee of the Red Cross and UNICEF for their efforts to foster awareness of the issue of anti-personnel mines;

6. Encourages efforts to promote international cooperation to assist in the detection and clearance of unremoved mines;

7. Requests all States to render full support for prevention of the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines and for protection and assistance for the victims;

8. Invites the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations to intensify their efforts to ensure that all possible assistance is given to child victims of anti-personnel mines, who are often disabled for life, with a view to their physical and psychological rehabilitation and social reintegration, and also to support to this end the activities of non-governmental organizations in the field;

9. Decides to examine this question, and especially the above-mentioned study, at its fifty-first session under the agenda item entitled "Rights of the child".